

COPS vs Cops: How Does Community- oriented Policing Coexist with Crime-fighting Policing?

Master's Thesis Proposal by Kian Gaines

Introduction

- **Community-oriented policing services (COPS):** in response to criticism of police during the Civil Rights Movement.
- **1994 Crime Bill** earmarked money for police departments to create COP programs.
- Criticism of the police continues and has intensified along with calls to **defund / abolish the police**.



Community-Oriented Policing Services (COPS)

- **COPS:** civilian participation in crime-prevention and problem-solving.
 - *Community involvement/collaboration*
 - *Problem solving*
 - *Organizational decentralization (Chappell & Lanza-Kaduce, 2004; Reisig, 2010; Kennedy & Moore, 1995; and Cordner, 1998).*
- Two models:
 - *Broken Windows (disorder reduction)*
 - *Social Disorganization (bolster community's social processes)*
- Community policing: philosophical, strategic, tactical, and organizational dimensions (Cordner 1999).

COPS' 4 Dimensions

- **Philosophical:** Ideas and beliefs about what the police are and what they should do
- **Strategic:** Face-to-face interactions between police & community; i.e., proactive
- **Tactical:** Specific actions/ programs to reduce crime; allow community to voice concerns
- **Organizational:** Moving away from the paramilitary structure → flatter hierarchy; low-ranking officers given more decision-making powers

Crime- Fighting Policing

- Reactive vs Proactive
- Legitimate Use of Violence
- Militarization of Police
 - *Military Cooperation with Law Enforcement Officers Act*
 - *National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) 1033 Program*
 - “As of June 2020, there are around 8,200 federal, state and local law enforcement agencies from 49 states and four U.S. territories participating in the [NDAA] program” (Defense Logistics Agency).

Prior Methodology of COPS Studies

■ Quantitative

- *Questionnaires*
- *Randomized controlled trials*
- *Quasi-experiments*
- *Time-series analyses*

■ Qualitative

- *Ethnographic observations*
- *Focus groups*
- *In-depth interviews*

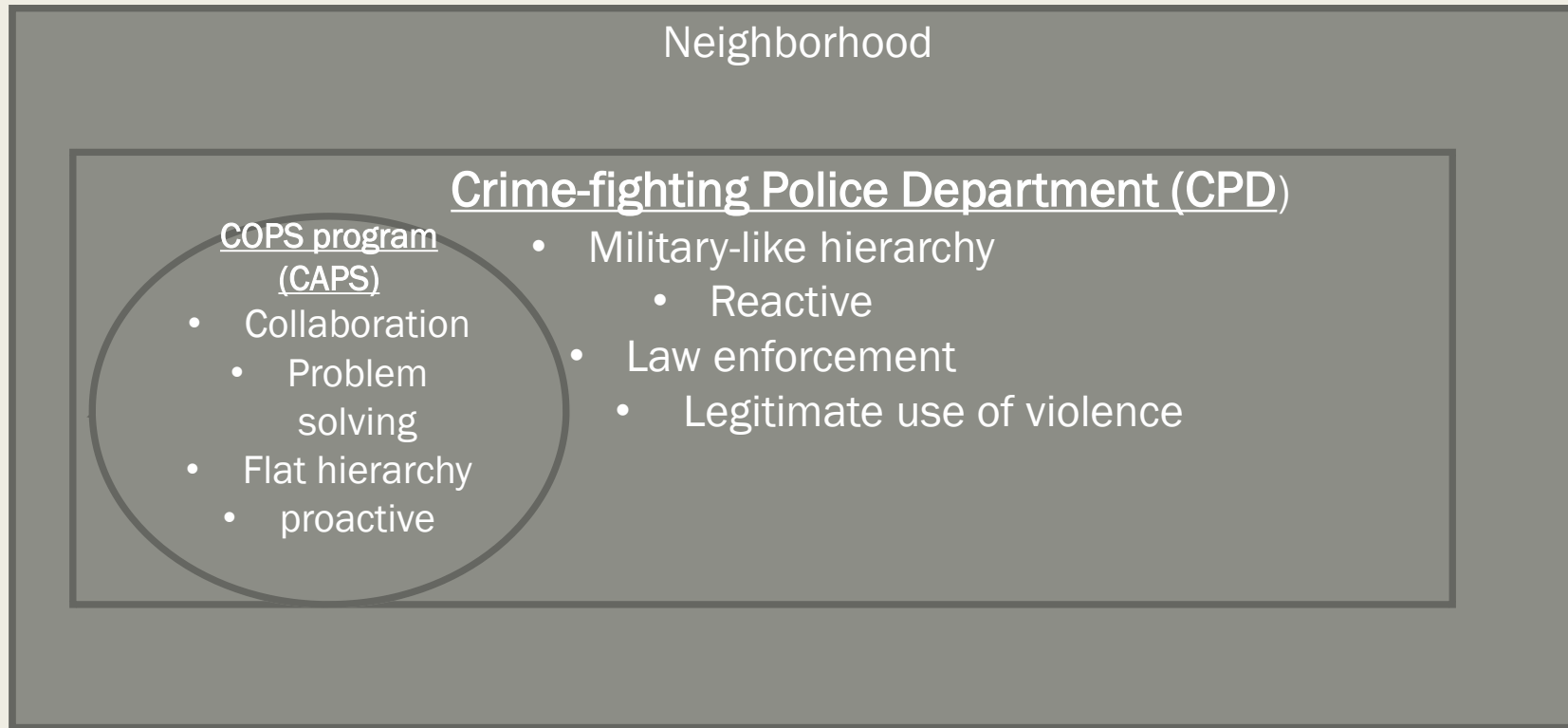
Methodological Takeaways

- The proper **unit of analysis** is not the program but the police organization and its capacity to be flexible, innovative, and collaborative (Kennedy & Moore 1995).
- Existing research focuses on the community-policing aspect only.
 - *Exception: Amada Armenta's study of Nashville's El Protector community policing program*
- Research design should consider the effect of conflicting ideologies operating within the same context (COPS and Crime-fighting Policing working in the same department).
- My focus: How CAPS operates within the 2nd District Police Department, while paying attention to the culture of the department and the culture of the community.

My Experience Learning About Community-Oriented Policing

- Initial hope for community-oriented policing as an alternative.
- Shocked to learn that COPS has been operating in the U.S for nearly 30 years.
 - *Chicago Alternative Policing Strategy (CAPS)*
- Disillusionment with policing reforms.
- Wonder: Why hasn't it worked?
- Reconciling COPS with my idea of the traditional police culture.

Mind Map



Research Questions

- What are traditional crime-fighting police's attitudes toward community policing?
- In what ways (if any) do these attitudes affect members of community policing programs or their goals?
- What are the goals of community policing programs *versus* crime-fighting police and how are they measured?
- How are CAPS officers and officers in general trained?

Procedures (Qualitative Methods)

- Interviews with both CAPS officers (community-oriented policing officers).
- Observations of CAPS zoom meetings.
- Analysis of CPD artifacts.
- Grounded Theory framework to analyze interview and observational data.
- Organizational Hypocrisy
 - *Organizations acting in ways counter to their stated goals.*

Preliminary Findings

- Only 8 of 25 police districts currently have community-police events posted on their calendars for the near future.
- 4 of the 8 are in more affluent neighborhoods in Chicago's north side.
- In zoom meetings community members are unable to turn their cameras on and the chat has been off or host only.
- Potential behavioral patterns
 - *Deflection of criticism*
 - *Assuaging fears of community members*

QUESTIONS?



The Strategic Dimension? – “Many commentators have taken the view that community policing is little more than a new police marketing strategy” (Cordner 1996: 6). Images courtesy of Chicago’s Office of Community Policing website.